

## Characteristics of the Ph.D. candidate Iva Schödelbauerová

Iva Schödelbauerová has been accepted as a PhD student in 2004. Before that, she has very successfully defended her BSc and MSc theses, which were done under my supervision, which means that the candidate has been under my supervision for almost 10 years. Therefore I feel I can very well characterize her abilities in the field of science.

Iva was always a very meticulous person, able to work with an unbelievable precision. Another striking feature of her personality was her extremely positive approach to anything she has ever done. Nothing was a problem for her. This is probably why she has achieved such good results in her thesis. I should not forget, however, that she also owes a lot to many excellent specialists in the field, which she visited and cooperated with. To name just a few: Raymond Tremblay from Humacao, Puerto Rico, with whom she spend some time by collecting data on some of his pet *Lepanthes* species, has taught her a lot about the life histories of tropical orchids and about the methods how to evaluate their life history data, especially analyses of transition matrices. Dave Roberts from the Royal Botanical Gardens in Kew has enabled her access to their incomparable collection of orchid floras, which was the first step to her (at least in my eyes) most valued paper – that on determinants of orchid species diversity, which is about to appear in *Biological Conservation*. Susan Renner, the director of the Munich Botanical Garden, where Iva also spent some time, should also not be forgotten.


Besides of these one-to-one contacts, she gained a lot from her active attendance in a number of conferences (1st European Congress of Conservation Biology in Eger, Hungary, 2006; Congreso Latino Americano de Botanica, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 2006; Orchid Evolutionary Biology and Conservation: From Linnaeus to the 21st century, London 2007; 3<sup>rd</sup> International Orchid Conservation Congress, San Jose, Costa Rica, 2007 etc.), where she had oral or poster presentations on her work. Attendance on these meetings enabled her to establish contact with the leading people in the field.

The lively international contacts, together with her exceptional positive attitude, meticulousness and natural talent have produced excellent results, illustrated in her thesis. Needless to say that she now continues in an undiminished pace in her research of the determinants of orchid species diversity as a full-time researcher in the Centre for Biodiversity Research at the Institute of Systems Biology and Ecology of the Academy of Sciences, where we now aim to determine the relative role of island connectivity using the data from Lesser Antilles collected by Jim Ackerman and Raymond Tremblay.

Last, but not least, Iva has very successfully led several parallel practicals to my course Mathematics for biologists and was very well accepted by the students.

Based on what I have said above, I feel that Iva Schödelbauerová meets all the prerequisites and I recommend her thesis for defense.

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